baskets with two weaves filled with custard-apple tree leaves between, and which are impenetrable by rain. There are also hébechets [or: ibichets], which are the sacks through which they strain their manioc flour. Also, there is the couleuvre [lit: 'adder'—because of its snake-like shape?—Ed.], a kind of arm-long sock to press the flour in. They attach the top to a peg and from the bottom roll a staff which they weigh down heavily, either by sitting on it or otherwise, and in no time their flour is dry. Others make matoutous, which are their tables. They are low, some round, some square, a little higher than a cassava. All this small handiwork which we have mentioned is made of certain large rushes that they call oualomam [ouallomam] that they dry and split into long, thin strips and paint black or red before using them. The red is from annatto, the black is from [65] the gum tree or the sandalwood which they burn. So that the dyes will be fast, they dissolve the second bark of a certain tree in water, which gives a strong liquid glue. They wet the reeds with this, then put on their annatto or black, then rub the reeds again with the gluey water. After drying in the sun, the paint never comes off. Others among them make belts; others fishing lines and so forth. When they go to bed, they always make a fire beneath their beds.

The Labors of The Women

The women are almost slaves of the men. They provide them with food and drink, take care of the children, and follow them everywhere to prepare their food.

As soon as they get up, they also go to bathe. Then they begin to scrape and shred manioc, make bread for breakfast, and prepare whatever they have for their husbands. Breakfast over, the women go to work. Some go to their gardens to plant manioc or sweet potatoes with a pointed stick, since they do not use hoes; others weed. The men do not trouble at all with that. The women who stay at the hut make cotton hammocks or make oil to rub or grease their husbands' hair with. They make this oil from a seed which they call coufheu. They first let the seed rot, then dry it over the fire, then knead it between their hands, often spitting on it. Then they put it in the sun for a while and afterwards throw it in their couleuvres and press it to squeeze out the oil. They also make oil from the

seeds of prickly palmettos. They pile these in a mortar, boil them in water from time to time, and press them as stated above. Others spin cotton, which occupation they resume at night by the fire. They also take care of the sick, and for that they apply themselves to learning the medicinal plants which are good for the illnesses. They have some excellent remedies which are very [66] effective. We will someday know more about them, if it pleases God. Nevertheless, neither the men nor the women wear themselves out with work.

CHAPTER IX

Their Drinking Parties

We will not call them feasts because they only hold their debaucheries to drink and to get drunk, both the men and women. They just call them ouicou, which is the drink that they make from cassava, as strong as they can for these occasions. They hold them nearly every day in various places for various reasons. The most famous drinking party is for war. They hold one when the man and woman have their first male child. They likewise celebrate when they cut off all the hair of their children for the first time. Also when their boys are growing up and attain their adolescence they make them fast, and then hold a celebration. The young men in question capture a Mamfénix or merlin or some other bird of prey and feed it for some time preceding the celebration. Then, everybody being assembled, the father of the young man takes the bird and kills it on the head of his son, and having crushed and ground the body of the bird, puts it into water. Then, after slashing the body of his son with agouti teeth or something else until the blood comes, he bathes and rubs him with this water. Afterwards they make the young man lie very straight in a bed which is hung from the top of the hut, and he must maintain this posture, or else (they imagine) he will become deformed. If he should bend over, he would remain bent, if he should bend a leg, the leg would always remain bent. They also make him fast for too long a time. Next, they dry the heart and feet of the bird and hang them around his neck. For some, who are stronger, they mix a great deal of pimento with the water of which we spoke, and make them eat the bird's heart, and imagine that that will make the boys valiant.